(b) how many accidents have taken place on these two roads during the last three years; and

(c) what is the progress of developing the bridle path from Gobind Dham to Hemkunt Shrine in Uttarakhand?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. K.ANTONY): (a) Upgradation of National Highway-58 from Rishikesh to Badrinath to double lane specification by Border Roads Organization (BRO) is already-in progress. The road portion from Rishikesh to Gobind Ghat is a part of above National Highway.

(b) In last three years 184 accidents have been reported on the above National Highway.

(c) This path from Gobind Dham to Hemkunt Shrine is with the State Government.

Withdrawal of army from J and K

†3709. SHRI AJAYMAROO:
SHRI T.S. BAJWA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set ur^a high level Committee for suggesting measures for phased withdrawal of army from Jammu & Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the policy of Government in this regard;

. (d) whether Government have started process of withdrawing army from the State; and

(e) if so, the number of army men being withdrawn in the first phase?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) It has been decided by the Government to set up an Expert Panel to determine whether there is a need to re-locate and reconfigure the existing Security Forces, keeping in mind the security needs of the State. However, the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

quantum of troops deployed in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is continuously assessed and reviewed by the Army based on the changing threat perception.

Withdrawal of troops from J and K

†3710. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the process of withdrawal of troops from Jammu & Kashmir has started;

(b) the number of troops withdrawn so far;

(c) the total number of troops proposed to be withdrawn; and

(d) by when this work would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The quantum of troops deployed in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is continuously assessed and reviewed by the Army based on the changing threat perception.

Strategy regarding safety in Indian Ocean region

†3711. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the concerns of India regarding safety in the Indian Ocean region;

(b) whether any strategy has been made to deal with these concerns; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) India's security concerns in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) are primarily related to the following aspects:-

(i) Territorial disputes,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.